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583 being those who give a dowry to the daughter. This really is the most natural and reasonable thing.

During this time, then, newlyweds customarily clear fields for the in-laws, even more so for mothers-in-law if they are widows; they make canoes for them, build them houses, and provide them with other services. Most particularly they go out to hunt and fish for them; and it is their greatest pride and satisfaction to come to the house and throw on the ground the string of fish or the deer tied up by its legs, at the same time that they say: "Here is your little piece of game (or your little fish)."

837 134. We have more than sufficient data and proof that
[684] Indians are customarily faithful and constant in their marriages; although there is not an absolute lack of cases in their stories of being whipped with hammock ropes or hooks, when bloodier action does not take place. /63/

595 135. We have spoken about polygamy in another chapter, to which we refer here.

582 We must also state, although without more explanation, that there is no prohibition of exogamic unions. This appears quite clear in the oral literature and in daily life. It is true that they prefer in general marriage with similar people, like the adage "like seeks like"; and in the literature marriage with foreigners, not as such but as unknowns, appears severely censured, like the one in the country song: "Who drinks water from a gourd -- and marries in a strange land, -- doesn't know whether the water is clean nor whether the woman is good."

[563] And old people do not customarily look very favorably on the marriage of their daughters with Creoles, however good they may be and however good their intentions are, because they carry them off far away and because instead of being helped by their sons-in-law, they frequently have to become servants of them, and, finally, because Creoles do not usually have the skills useful for the practical life of the Indians. The old

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/63 cont./ people in these cases usually exaggerate to the point of saying that "just as a dog joins with a bitch and a horse with a mare, thus an Indian man should marry an Indian woman, and a Creole a Creole." And they customarily also say that if Creoles want to marry their daughters, they must bring their sisters to marry Indian men.

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136. Now, so that the similarity of these Indians to the ancient Indians of Caracas can be seen, I am going to transcribe a paragraph of Pimentel's geographic account, which deals with the subject of marriages.

In regard to marriages and the absence of formalities and festivities, as well as the spontaneity and absolute liberty of those who contract it, the present-day situation also coincides with the ancient one of the Caracas Indians, of whom J. Pimentel writes: "In marriages they have this system: when an Indian finds an Indian woman who pleases him, he gives her to understand this with words, and if it seems to him that she responds favorably, he goes to her house, and if she gives him something to sit on and brings him a gourd bowl of water so that he can wash and puts out something for him to eat, he then understands the will of the girl and they go and sleep together without it seeming bad to her parents and relatives, and thus they are married, and in this marriage only their will keeps it going for a greater or lesser period of time." /64/

Chapter XVI

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What Should Be Understood By Kanaima?

137. The firm belief in Kanaima. 138. General statements. 139. Magic properties. 140. Are they happy with these ideas? 141. What is the missionaries' idea of the Kanaima?

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595 dawning consciousness of Christian folk-customs, but it was evident that the
[177] majority of men had only one wife and none was surely determined to have more
643] than six. The cacique, although in general his tendency is to lead the tribe into more Europeanized ways, has several wives.

586 A man has the right to eject an unsatisfactory wife and a wife has the right to leave a man and in both cases the marriage is automatically and completely
581] dissolved. These statements were so fully confirmed that the situation is no doubt a known one, but the Indians always added that husbands and wives do not, in fact, separate. From our own observations and records it cannot be doubted
587 that marriages are normally permanent. Widowers and widows remarry at will and without restriction. I could not learn that a widow was expected to, or normally did, marry her husband's brother, as occurs among some primitive peoples, but there is no restriction against this if it is desired.

582 There does not appear to be any strong feeling regarding incest. It is doubtful whether marriages between relatives of the first degree, brother and sister or parent and child, occur, but marriages of first cousins (although by no means obligatory, as in some tribes) are certainly permissible and so are marriages of uncle and niece and aunt and nephew. There is thus no requirement of exogamy (even first-degree incest is not absolutely rejected on moral grounds) and there is an equal absence of obligatory endogamy, marriages with members of other tribes are uncommon, because of lack of opportunity, but do occur
582 and are not considered abnormal or reprehensible in any way. Marriages with
563 Venezuelans have twice occurred, without any evident strong feeling, but there was some tendency to deprecate them and it is curious that these two unions,
684 among all those on which we checked, were the only childless ones. From
563 rumor or gossip, not accurate information but probably with some basis, it appears that more casual cohabitation with Venezuelans (or other non-Indians) is, however, bitterly resented and that the offending outsiders have in at least one case been put to death.

589 There are very few unmarried adult females. Among the Indians definite-
848 ly recorded, only one adult female was unmarried, and she had a child, a fact
582] not considered particularly discreditable to her or disabling to the child. That illegitimacy is so uncommon can be ascribed rather to early and almost universal marriage than to any moral reason.

582 Child-marriage was formerly common among some related tribes (although
[17] usually not consummated until puberty — another point emphasizing that the
581] basis of marriage is not exclusively and perhaps not primarily sexual). It apparently does not now occur among Kamarakotos among whom the girls appear commonly to marry two or three years after the first onset of puberty.

589 All the older men are married, apparently without exception. Although
595 polygamy is far from universal, it is common enough to make the number of
162 marriageable girls constantly less than that of marriageable boys, so that there